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Coldingham

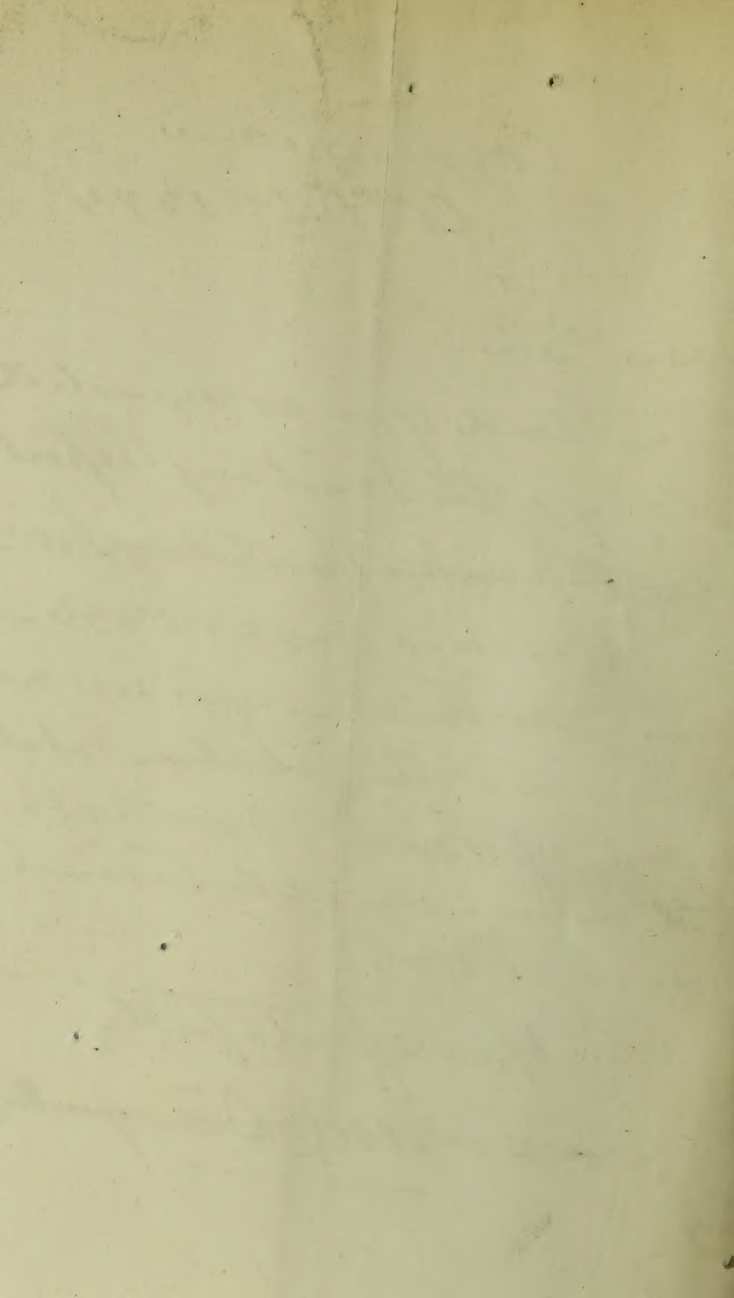
21st Feb^y 1894

Dear Sir.

I send you as requested
a copy of the Sanitary Report
of the Parish of Coldingham
for the years 1892 & 1893. The
County Medical Officer now
draws out the Tabular State-
ment of Births, Deaths &c so
that I am unable to send
you it for 1893.

Yours faithfully,

Edw M Dougall



Sanitary Report of the Parish of Colding- ham for the year 1893.

January.

The Year was ushered in with intense frost which continued till the 9th January when a thaw set in as suddenly and unexpectedly as the frost had been rapid and severe. Fresh weather continued till the 18th of the month, From the 20th to the end of the month mild, genial Spring weather prevailed, the thermometer registering in different parts of the Parish upwards of 50° Fah.:. During the month the health of the Parish continued very good, and there was no case of infectious disease notified. On the 9th Cairnbank School was reopened after being closed for four weeks in consequence of cases of Scarlet fever at Press-mains and Myrtlehall, during the month of December.

February.

The first week in February was clear, dry and mild. In three districts of the Parish where the thermometer had a southerly exposure temperatures of 50°, 51°, and 52° were read for several days in succession at 3 p.m., Although the temperature during the day was thus high, at night the thermometer fell to from 2° to 4° below freezing point. On the evening of the 12th five degrees of frost was registered, which continued during the whole day of the 13th, On the evening of the 13th rain fell and the temperature rose to 43°; At midnight it fell to freezing point accompanied by a fall of Snow.

During the continuance of these variations of temperature there was a visitation of what seemed to be an Epidemic Catarrh, characterised by slight inflammatory affections of the eyes, throat, bronchial tubes and Stomach, and prevailed in several parts of the Parish, but the Seaward district so far as my experience goes was affected more severely than the inland district. As several members of the same household were seized it seemed to be infectious, - The affection was quite distinct from Influenza, but was evidently due to atmospheric conditions. On 20th and 22nd Scarlet fever was notified at South Falaknowe. Infection in these cases was clearly traced to

to the school, the children from Press-mains having just returned after being absent since the end of November. I visited Cairnbank School and carefully examined the children but I could discover no visible source of infection on the persons of any of them, I did not therefore consider it necessary to close the School. Isolation and disinfection were strictly carried out which it was hoped would prove sufficient to arrest the further spread of the fever. On the 23rd of the month a case of Typhoid or Enteric fever occurred in the family of John Younger residing in the village of Coldingham. The sanitary surroundings of Younger's house were not very satisfactory. The Byre and Stable closely adjoined the dwellinghouse, and a pump was in too close proximity. The water from this pump ^{however} was only used for the horse and cow, but it is not impossible that Margaret, the member of the family who became affected, and who usually watered the horse and cow, may herself have been in the habit of drinking from the same source, but this she denied. A large quantity of decaying vegetable matter, laid in front of the dwellinghouse, may have been an independent propagating cause of the typhoid parasite, as I have been quite unable to trace this isolated case of Enteric fever to a human origin. The case proved to be a very severe one and death resulted from abdominal complications at the end of the ninth week. Strict isolation and disinfection were carried out and no other case occurred. Towards the end of the month the weather became very stormy, the 25th being the most boisterous day of season and pulmonary affections prevailed, specially amongst children. Two deaths resulting from Inflammation of the Lungs were certified at St. Abbs and Northfield.

March.

The beginning of the month of March was characterised by wet, variable weather. On the 3rd a death was reported from Tetanus or Lockjaw, following amputation of the foot, two weeks after operation, the 3

3.
the adjoining Parish of Chimside there was a death from the same cause after injury to a finger. It is probable that Meteorological conditions acted as a common exciting cause. Although it may be considered foreign to this Report I may state that with the object of satisfying myself in regard to the communicability of Tetanus from the human being to the lower animals I secured two mice, and made a slight wound on each of them, into which I inserted a piece of tissue from the diseased limb, with the result that Tetanic symptoms followed, under which both of the animals succumbed. During the second and third weeks of this month there was dry settled weather, indeed with the exception of the first two days there was no rainfall during the month, Strong North-easterly winds prevailed, and while these continued Catarrhal affections were very common amongst adults, and children attended with a good deal of prostration, possibly akin to Influenza.

April.

During the first week of April there was fine, dry, mild weather, but for three days of the second week dense fogs with North-easterly winds prevailed and while this state of weather continued Twelve cases of Spurious Grouse occurred in the Seaward district. On the 10th I granted M^{rs} (Younger a certificate giving her permission to resume the selling of Milk as I considered there was no longer any danger of the disease of typhoid fever being communicated through this means. The first rain for six weeks occurred on the 14th accompanied by cold North-easterly winds, This change in the weather was attended by a marked increase of Bronchial affections. During the month several cases of chickenpox, a few cases of Measles, and German Measles, and eight cases of Whooping Cough occurred.

May.

The weather during the month of May was dry and mild and a clear cloudless sky. On the 1st and 26th there were slight showers of rain, but with these exceptions the weather during the entire month was exceptionally fine, and the state of health throughout the parish was a perfectly clean bill. There is only one circumstance in regard of sickness which came

14.
came under my notice this month which I deem worthy of record. The history of the case is somewhat interesting, and strikingly exemplifies how simply and unconsciously Scarlet fever may be spread in a district:- On the 2nd of May I was asked to visit at the house of David Burnside residing at Press-mains, I found his child four years of age confined to bed, and affected with general Dropsy. The mother informed me that the night before, the child had a severe convulsion fit, and in the morning she found ^{him} to be swelled all over the body. Previous to this he had been in his usual health and running about. The dropsy I discovered was due to inflammation of the Kidneys, and there could be no doubt that it was of a post Scarlatinal origin. The mother assured me that there had been no fever, no sore throat, no eruption, nor any of the symptoms which ordinarily usher in, or accompany the development of Scarlet fever, and until the appearance of the Dropsy there was nothing to indicate that the child was not in perfect health. As I was firmly persuaded there must have been a previous attack of Scarlet fever I insisted on as complete isolation as it was possible to carry out, and kept the child under close observation. On the third day after my visit I had the satisfaction to observe (desquamation) or shedding of the skin, which is a certain sign that the person so affected had been suffering from Scarlet fever. Now in this case there had been no symptoms to lead, even observant mother, to suppose that her child was otherwise than in perfect health, and had it not been for the supervention of dropsy the child would have been playing with his companions, and would thus have become a centre of a fresh outbreak of Scarlet fever. There can be little doubt that many such cases occur from time to time, and not being brought under notice of a Medical man many of the so-called causeless

5.
causeless epidemics of Scarlet fever thus spring up.

June.

The month of June was dry and warm till the 22nd when rain fell abundantly and also on the 23rd with cold North-easterly winds. About the middle of the month several cases of Diarrhœa - a few almost choleraic - occurred with one death in an infant Eighteen months old. In several districts of the Parish there was towards the end of the month almost an Epidemic of Varicella or Chickenpox.

July.

There was a considerable fall of rain during the first week of July accompanied by thunder and lightning and this was followed by hot sultry weather. During the week beginning with the 9th a large number of old and young were affected with a severe form of Summer Diarrhœa. There were however no fatal cases.

August.

From the middle of July to the end of August with the exception of some severe cases of Summer Diarrhœa there was little sickness. During this period there was fine, dry settled, warm Summer weather.

September.

September set in wet, considerable fall of temperature and cold westerly winds, the remainder of the month was dry, mild and bracing, and the health of the Parish throughout the entire month was very good. There was no case of infectious disease reported.

October.

The first week in October was cold and showery accompanied by a considerable fall in the Barometer, and there were several cases of Measles complicated by dysenteric Diarrhœa. The families at St. Abbs Lighthouse were affected with Whooping Cough and Bronchitis. On the 6th of the month I received from the District Clerk copy of a Report by the Sanitary Inspector in regard to a nuisance on the stabling premises occupied by Mr. John Wood in the village of Coldingham, with a request that I should examine into said nuisance and report. This I did same day, and I am glad to be able to add that steps were

6.
were shortly thereafter taken to remedy the state of matters complained of viz: an open middenstead in close proximity to the public road. The Middenstead is now enclosed, and the manure is removed at regular stated intervals. On the 12th of the month a case of Scarlet fever was notified at Rentonbarns, and during the month six additional cases occurred at the same farmstead and two at Berryhill Cottage Grant-house. On the 19th I visited the Renton district along with Mr. John McRae, Sanitary Inspector. A very careful examination of the surroundings, and a close questioning of the parents, did not throw any light as to how the outbreak originated. The parents all agreed that their children must have got the infection at School. It was therefore deemed advisable as the most likely means of checking what appeared to be the beginning of an Epidemic to close the School for 2 or 3 weeks and this was done by instructing Mr. Greig to make intimation to that effect. On the 16th a case of Typhoid or Enteric fever was notified at the farmhouse of Greenburn. It became cold and frosty towards the end of the month, and North-easterly winds prevailed and along with this change a case of Membranous Croup was notified at St. Abbs.

November.

On the second day of November I wrote Mr. Greig Renton, and Mr. John McRae, Sanitary Inspector, in reference to the reopening of Renton School on the 6th instant, have the premises thoroughly washed and fumigated before they were occupied, and instructed them to call all children from Rentonbarns, Howpark, and Berryhill Cottage returning to School before a Certificate was given by the Medical Officer of Health that it was safe for them to do so. Strong North-east, North-west and South-west winds prevailed during the greater part of the 3

the month, and from the 18th to the end of the month these winds strengthened into hurricanes. doing considerable damage to property. On the 14th a case of Scarlet fever was notified at Berryhill cottage, and on the 17th another case at Rentonbarns, as neither of these cases were in new centres, I did not consider it necessary to interfere with the arrangements made in regard to the reopening of Renton School. A case of Enteric fever was reported in the village of Auchencrow, and a case of Erysipelas in the village of Reston. On the 27th a case of Scarlet fever was notified at Horsley farm Steading, and on the 30th two cases of Membranous Croup at St. Abbs.

December.

December was characterised by a continuance of South-west, West-south-west winds which at times strengthened into gales. On the first of the month 10° of frost were registered and there was a considerable fall of Snow. On the 4th the first case of Scarlet fever was notified at St. Abbs and two cases at Rentonbush, As Renton School seemed to be the centre from which the Rentonbush cases originated I deemed it advisable to again close the School and this was done the ^{same} afternoon, The same day I gave authority to Mr. John McRae to carry out some alterations and improvements in the drainage at Rentonbarns cottages. On the 8th another case of Scarlet fever was notified as occurring at Horsley, and on the 9th at the Northgate Houndwood. From the 12th to the end of the month St. Abbs was visited by almost an Epidemic of throat affections principally confined to children. but several adults were also affected. In some instances Tonsillitis was the character which it assumed, not proceeding to Suppuration, but leaving behind it a hard, indolent swelling of the tonsils and glands of the neck. In other cases the tongue, and gums, were inflamed, and swollen; while in others distinct diphtheritic patches were seen to be scattered over the mouth and upper part of throat, and in others it developed into well marked Membranous or diphtheritic.

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diphtheritic Croup. Two and in some instances three forms of this affection coexisted in different members of the same household, leaving one to suspect their common origin, from one specific poison, in all likelihood diphtheritic or Scarlatinal. On the 15th a case of Scarlet fever occurred at Bogangreen farm house, and on the 21st a case occurred in the Village of Goldingham. As both of these were in attendance at Goldingham Public School I thought it judicious to close it at once, and took steps for this being done, and at the same time I instructed Mr. Gibson, Public School St. Abbs to close his School in consequence of an Epidemic of Diphtheritic Sore throat. Broncho-Pneumonia was also very prevalent during the month. The Pulmonary and Laryngeal affections seemed to have some relation to a Meteorological causation, as a cessation of the strong winds which prevailed for the greater of the month was followed by an almost immediate disappearance of the lung and throat diseases. In this connection I may mention that there has been a popular impression very generally credited amongst the Inhabitants of St. Abbs, that strong winds, specially North-east and South-west winds precede and accompany Laryngeal affections amongst children, and I must say that my experience of Thirty years confirms this belief. There can be little doubt that the children of Scrofulous, and Tubercular parents, are, especially during the winter months and while such winds prevail, very liable to be affected with Membranous Croup and other forms of Laryngeal disease. On the 29th of the month I wrote Mr. Greig sanctioning the reopening of Renton School on Tuesday 2nd January 1894 it having been closed from the 4th of December.

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9.
Bakeries.

The different Bakeries in the Parish have during the year been visited at intervals and all of them have always been found to be kept in a highly satisfactory condition.

Dairy, and
Cows-sheds.

The Dairy in the Village, and the Cows-sheds of several parties whom I knew to be in the habit of selling Milk have also been visited and in regard to none of them have I anything to complain of.

Parochial
Lodging House.

The Parochial Lodging or Poor House continues as formerly to be kept in a most satisfactory condition in every respect.

The tabular Mortality &c. Statement accompanies this Report.

James Dougall M. D.

Medical Officer of Health
For the Parish of Goldingham.

Goldingham,

17th January 1894.

Copies.
Sanitary Report

of the Parish of

Nottingham.

For the Year 1893.
